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CLMPTO

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1. A bidding system that receives bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and that receives information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, comprising:

bidding information receiving means for receiving bidding price range information sent by a bidder over a communication network; and

fee calculating means for calculating a fee based on the bidding price range information received by the bidding information receiving means.

2. A bidding system that receives bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and that receives information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, comprising:

bidding information receiving means for receiving bidding price information and bidding price range information sent by a bidder over a communication network;

bidding price information sending means for sending ~~bidding price information received by the bidding information~~ receiving means over the communication network to the bid caller;

bidding price information leakage prevention means for preventing the bidding price information received by the bidding information receiving means from letting the operator of the bidding system know; and

fee calculating means for calculating a fee based on the bidding price range information received by the bidding information receiving means.

3. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the bidding price range information is information made up of a predetermined price range including the bidding price.

4. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the fee calculation means calculates the fee using a table correlating the bidding price range information with fee information.

5. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the fee calculation means calculates the winning bidding fee based on the winning bidder information and the bidding price range information.

6. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the bidding system further comprises, on a bidder's terminal, means for comparing the bidding price information entered by the bidder with bidding range information, and prompting the bidder reenter a bidding price in case of an inconsistency.

7. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the bidding system further comprises means for restricting participation in the bidding if a bidder does not agree to payment of the bidding fee.

8. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the bidding system further comprises means for restricting participation in the bidding if a bidder does not enter a method for payment of the bidding fee.

9. (Amended) The bidding system according to claim 1, wherein the bidding system further comprises means for confirming a bidder's ability to settle payment, based on a method of payment of the bidding fee entered by the bidder, and means for restricting participation in the bidding if the bidder's ability to settle payment cannot be confirmed with that confirmation means.

10. A bidding system that receives bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and that receives information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, comprising:

shared key receiving means for receiving, over a communication network, a shared key different for each bidder that has been created by the bid caller and stored in an electronic envelope;

shared key sending means for sending, over the

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communication network, the received shared keys to the bidders;

bidding price information receiving means for receiving, over the communication network, bidding price information that has been encrypted with a shared key sent by the shared key sending means; and

bidding price information sending means for sending, over the communication network, bidding price information that has been received by the bidding price information receiving means to the bid caller.

11. ~~A bidding method for receiving bids from bidders by~~
~~disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from~~
~~a bid caller calling for bids, and receiving information about~~
~~a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding~~
~~information, comprising:~~

a bidding information receiving step of receiving bidding price range information sent by a bidder over a communication network; and

a fee calculating step of calculating a fee based on the bidding price range information received in the bidding

information receiving step.

12. A bidding method for receiving bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and receiving information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, comprising:

a bidding information receiving step of receiving bidding price information and bidding price range information sent by a bidder over a communication network;

a bidding price information sending step of sending

a bidding price information sending step of sending received bidding price information over the communication network to the bid caller;

a bidding price information leakage prevention step of preventing the received bidding price information from becoming known to the operator of the bidding system; and

a fee calculating step of calculating a fee based on the received bidding price range information.

13. A bidding method that for receiving bids from bidders by

disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and receiving information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, comprising:

a shared key receiving step of receiving, over a communication network, a shared key different for each bidder that has been created by the bid caller and stored in an electronic envelope;

a shared key sending step of sending, over the communication network, the received shared keys to the bidders;

a bidding price information receiving step of receiving, over the communication network, bidding price information that has been encrypted with a shared key; and

a bidding price information sending step of sending, over the communication network, the received encrypted bidding price information to the bid caller.

14. A storage medium storing a bidding program for receiving bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and receiving information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, the bidding program performing on a computer:

a bidding information receiving step of receiving bidding price range information sent by a bidder over a communication network; and

a fee calculating step of calculating a fee based on the bidding price range information received in the bidding information receiving step.

15. A storage medium storing a bidding program for receiving bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and receiving information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, the bidding program performing on a computer:

a bidding information receiving step of receiving bidding price information and bidding price range information sent by a bidder over a communication network;

a bidding price information sending step of sending received bidding price information over the communication network to the bid caller;

a bidding price information leakage prevention step of preventing the received bidding price information from becoming known to the operator of the bidding system; and

a fee calculating step of calculating a fee based on the received bidding price range information.

16. A storage medium storing a bidding program for receiving bids from bidders by disclosing call-for-bid information that has been received from a bid caller calling for bids, and receiving information about a winning bidder determined by the bid caller based on that bidding information, the bidding program performing on a computer:

a shared key receiving step of receiving, over a communication network, a shared key different for each bidder that has been created by the bid caller and stored in an electronic envelope;

a shared key sending step of sending, over the communication network, the received shared keys to the bidders;

a bidding price information receiving step of receiving, over the communication network, bidding price information that has been encrypted with a shared key; and

a bidding price information sending step of sending, over the communication network, the received encrypted bidding price information to the bid caller.

17. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the bidding price range information is information made up of a predetermined price range including the bidding price.

18. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the fee calculation means calculates the fee using a table correlating the bidding price range information with fee information.

19. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the fee calculation means calculates the winning bidding fee based on the winning bidder information and the bidding price range information.

20. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the bidding system further comprises, on a bidder's terminal, means for comparing the bidding price information entered by the bidder with bidding range information, and prompting the bidder reenter a bidding price in case of an inconsistency.

21. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the bidding system further comprises means for restricting participation in the bidding if a bidder does not agree to payment of the bidding fee.

22. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the bidding system further comprises means for restricting participation in the bidding if a bidder does not enter a method for payment of the bidding fee.

23. (New) The bidding system according to claim 2, wherein the bidding system further comprises means for confirming a bidder's ability to settle payment, based on a method of payment of the bidding fee entered by the bidder, and means for restricting

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participation in the bidding if the bidder's ability to settle payment cannot be confirmed with that confirmation means.

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